

PHI

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Miracle-Ear®

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October 24, 2000

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala:

The FDA is proposing to alter the way hearing aids are sold that may put me out of business and will alter hearing care for millions of our nation's hard of hearing.

I am a board certified state-licensed hearing instrument specialist and hearing instrument service specialist for over 12½ years. I am currently employed at Sears/Miracle Ear store in the Whitehall Mall in Allentown, PA. The FDA is now advocating that audiologists, without any justification, to be the sole entry point into the hearing industry by allowing states to require tests that only audiologists could conduct prior to the purchase of a hearing instrument. This rule would severely impede public health and safety and would increase costs to the hearing impaired. By allowing audiologists exclusive rights in this system would put hundreds of thousands of people out of business, people like myself who have dedicated years of professional service to the hearing impaired.

Hearing impairment is a major health care concern. Please don't let the FDA put forth their proposed rule that would impede access to needed hearing health care services for millions of Americans.

Sincerely,

Paul Carpenter, BC/HIS
PHI, Inc./Miracle Ear

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